

In Summary:

SEAC Peer-to-Peer Learning Network



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The [Student Engagement and Attendance Center](#) (SEAC) hosted the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Learning Network, a closed network convening of seven state educational agencies (SEAs) and their local educational agencies (LEAs) and partners. The P2P Learning Network is designed to foster the development of new or existing relationships among states dedicated to improving attendance and learning among students. In 2022, the following states participated in the P2P Learning Network: California, Delaware, New Jersey, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Washington.

Available peer learning opportunities included “Question of Practice” sessions with featured presenters. These sessions afforded volunteers a unique opportunity to present on a topic related to attendance and engagement practices and policies in their state. Participants benefitted from hearing about best practices or lessons learned from their peers. In addition to these sessions, SEAC hosted topic sessions based on the perceived needs of states and their local partners. During all sessions, at least 30 minutes were allotted for breakout groups, in which states engaged with one another on the session topic.

SEAC’s first question of practice session was a presentation from the [Greater Omaha Attendance and Learning Services \(GOALS\) Center](#) in Nebraska, an organization that aims to “address absenteeism and at-risk behavior through encouragement of coordinated efforts to improve student attendance and learning.” The GOALS Center presentation was timely for participants as educators struggled to identify missing students and the reasons for their chronic absence. Nicole Seymour, the director of the GOALS Center, shared how the pandemic shifted the organization’s focus toward bridging the widening gap between students, families, and school districts. COVID-19 was disruptive for schools and families, but GOALS stepped in to listen to needs and provide support, such as assisting with connectivity issues that made remote learning a challenge. The transition back to in-person learning underscored the strain COVID-19 placed on students. For example, students who previously struggled to maintain housing and financial stability were now missing school for work because a family member had fallen ill with COVID-19.

Another SEAC P2P session focused on equitable practices for engaging students and families and featured presentations from [Lacy Wood](#), principal technical assistance consultant for the American Institutes for Research, and Jane Groff, executive director of the [Kansas Parent Information Resource Center](#). Wood framed the presentation by defining equitable engagement as “an ongoing, two-way process of building relationships, working collaboratively to support all students, and sharing power.” For families to feel like trusted, equal partners in their students’ success, districts must have supports in place that incorporate families’ voices. Groff introduced a [survey tool](#) the Kansas Technical Assistance System Network developed for Kansas LEAs to administer to parents or guardians of students. The survey was designed to inform districts about schools’ success in engaging parents in their children’s education. This session presented SEAs and LEAs with approaches, such as the survey tool, for identifying and incorporating equitable student and family engagement practices in schools and districts.

The P2P Learning Network has also facilitated conversations on other topics, such as attendance trends and supports for students with disabilities, root cause analysis in data disaggregation, and trauma-informed social-emotional learning.